



MYZANTHA OBSCURA: Gould

J. Gould and B. C. Richter del. et lith.

C. Hullmandel Imp.

MYZANTHA OBSCURA, *Gould.*

Sombre Honey-eater.

Myzantha obscura, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part VIII. p. 159.

Bil-yâ-goo-rong, Aborigines of the lowland, and

Bil-youŕ-ga, Aborigines of the mountain districts of Western Australia.

THIS species inhabits Swan River and the south-western portion of Australia generally, where it beautifully represents the *Myzantha garrula* of New South Wales. In habits, actions and disposition the two birds nearly assimilate, minor differences being easily discernible.

Mr. Gilbert's notes supply me with the following information, which I give in his own words:—

“It inhabits every variety of wooded situation, in all parts of the colony, and is generally met with in small families. In flying the wings are moved very rapidly, but the bird does make progress in proportion to the apparent exertion; at times, when passing from tree to tree, its flight is graceful in the extreme.

“Its note is a loud *pee-pee*, which is often very much varied.

“The stomach is small but tolerably muscular; and the food, which consists of coleopterous and other insects, seeds and berries, is procured both on the ground and among the branches.

“The nest is built on an upright fork of the topmost branches of the smaller gum trees, and is formed of small dried sticks lined with soft grasses and feathers. The eggs are eleven and a half lines long by nine lines broad, of a rich orange-buff, obscurely spotted and blotched with a deeper tint, particularly at the larger end.”

The sexes offer but little difference in colour, but the female is somewhat smaller in all her admeasurements.

Forehead yellowish olive; lores, line beneath the eye and ear-coverts black; head and all the upper surface dull grey, with an indistinct line of brown down the centre of each feather, giving the whole a mottled appearance; wings and tail brown, margined at the base of the external webs with wax-yellow, the tail terminating in white; throat and under surface dull grey, becoming lighter on the lower part of the abdomen and under tail-coverts; the feathers of the breast with a crescent-shaped mark of light brown near the extremity, and tipped with light grey; irides dark brown; bare skin round the eye, bill, and bare patch on each side of the throat, bright yellow; legs and feet dull reddish yellow; claws dark brown.

The Plate represents the two sexes of the natural size.